United Nations A/C.1/53/PV.30

General Assembly
Fifty-third
First Committee
30th Meeting
Friday, 13 November 1998, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

Chairman: Mr. Mernier ..... (Belgium)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda items 63 to 80 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): This morning the secretariat has distributed informal paper 9, which lists the draft resolutions to be taken up today.

Does any delegation wish to comment on this list?

Mr. Campbell (Australia): I should like to ask that the first draft resolution on the list, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11, be taken up a little later today. The sponsors still need to talk to the proposers of amendments to see the position with regard to the text.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I hear no objection. Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.11 will therefore be taken up later in the day, and, of course, documents A/C.1/53/L.53 and A/C.1/53/L.64 — amendments relating to it — will be taken up later as well.

We will now take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2. I call on the representative of India to introduce this revised draft.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", was introduced by the Indian delegation on 2 November 1998.

We are pleased with the broad range of support that this draft resolution has received from various delegations. My delegation conducted extensive consultations with several interested delegations, especially with regard to the operative paragraphs. Following these consultations, changes were introduced with regard to a new third preambular paragraph, which addresses the issue of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as a new operative paragraph 3, which

> "*Calls upon* all Member States to take the necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to promote nuclear disarmament, with the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons".

With a view to simplifying the text and focusing on the core issues, operative paragraph 2 has also been slightly modified. Since this is the first year that this Committee and perhaps the General Assembly will address this draft resolution, we felt that the inclusion of the old operative paragraph 4 could be deferred to a later stage.

All these changes are reflected in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, which is now available to delegations.

The dangerous operational configuration of nuclear weapons, even after the end of the cold war, is a risk to humanity. This draft resolution highlights the problem confronting the international community. We hope that it will receive widespread support.

I request that the decision on this item be slightly deferred, because a number of delegations have yet to arrive. I therefore request that the Chair ask other

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delegations to introduce their draft resolutions and perhaps defer the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2 by 10 or 15 minutes.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The problem is that I already have two requests to postpone decisions on draft resolutions. So I would have proposed suspending the meeting for 10 minutes, but I see that the representative of Japan is ready to introduce a revised draft resolution.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I wish to introduce draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", on behalf of the following sponsors: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Romania, Spain and Japan.

Since I introduced the original draft resolution, consultations have been conducted with various interested delegations. The revised draft resolution before the Committee is the outcome of those consultations, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the cooperation and flexibility shown by the delegations concerned.

Changes have been made to the second preambular paragraph and to the third and fifth subparagraphs of operative paragraph 4 in order to accommodate comments made by certain delegations. In spite of these changes, the fundamental nature of the draft resolution has not been altered. Its purpose is still to stress the importance of strengthening nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation efforts and to indicate concrete and realistic actions to be pursued with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons.

Since 1994 this purpose has been consistently manifested in the successive draft resolutions on the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, but the purpose is much more keenly felt this year than before because the world witnessed the nuclear test explosions in South Asia in May this year. Consequently, this year's draft resolution is put in the context of the circumstances created by these nuclear tests.

It is the sponsors' wish that the First Committee adopt this draft resolution by an overwhelming majority.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Since practically all delegations are now present, I suggest that we now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, "Reducing nuclear danger".

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, entitled "Reducing nuclear danger", was introduced by the representative of India at this meeting. The sponsors are listed in the draft resolution and in document A/C.1/53/INF.2.

A separate, recorded vote has been requested on operative paragraph 3.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We are now proceeding to the voting on operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, which reads:

(*spoke in English*)

> "*Also calls upon* Member States to take the necessary measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons in all its aspects and to promote nuclear disarmament, with the ultimate objective of eliminating nuclear weapons".

Does any delegation wish to explain its position before we take action on this operative paragraph? As I see none, I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Thailand, Tunisia,

Turkmenistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia

Against:
None

Abstaining:
Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Yemen

Operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2 was retained by 67 votes to none, with 53 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no delegation wishes to explain its vote, the Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, "Reducing nuclear danger", as a whole.

Does any delegation wish to explain its position before the vote? As I see none, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:
Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Niger, Oman, Pakistan, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:
Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:
Argentina, Armenia, Belarus, China, El Salvador, Guatemala, Israel, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, San Marino, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, as a whole, was adopted by 68 votes to 44, with 12 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their vote.

Mr. Li Chonghe (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): The Chinese delegation commented on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16, "Reducing nuclear danger", when it was introduced on 2 November.

The Chinese delegation believes that nuclear danger is not limited to nuclear weapons, but also covers such aspects as nuclear proliferation. The third preambular paragraph of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) clearly points out that nuclear proliferation would seriously enhance the danger of nuclear war.

For the draft resolution to reflect the danger of nuclear war in a more balanced and objective manner, and be really conducive to the prevention of that danger, it should be

amended to include a call on all countries to accede to the NPT. The Chinese delegation planned to propose amendments to the draft resolution along those lines, conducting consultations with the parties concerned and receiving extensive support. At the same time, we conducted several rounds of consultations with the Indian delegation, which incorporated some of our proposed amendments and made certain improvements to the text. However, taken as a whole, this draft resolution is still far from balanced, and it is not totally satisfactory.

For all those reasons, the Chinese delegation abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2.

Ms. Crittenberger (United States of America): The United States voted "No" on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2, "Reducing nuclear danger", because it is yet another unrealistic nuclear disarmament draft resolution which fails to acknowledge the real progress being made at the unilateral, bilateral and multilateral levels to reduce nuclear dangers.

For the United States, the cold war and the nuclear arms race have been consigned to the ash heap of history. Unilateral and bilateral efforts over the last decade have reduced the size of nuclear arsenals. Globally, there is less possibility of a nuclear exchange involving the five nuclear-weapon States than at any time over the last 50 years. The United States has taken advantage of the new political realities of the post-cold-war world by making deep reductions in its nuclear arsenal and in other ways.

I shall cite only a few successes. The United States has unilaterally reduced its deployed non-strategic nuclear weapons by 80 per cent. Since 1988, the United States has reduced its overall nuclear warhead stockpile by 59 per cent — 80 per cent of the United States non-strategic stockpile and 47 per cent of the strategic stockpile. Once START II has entered into force and has been fully implemented, the United States will have reduced its strategic nuclear forces by two thirds from cold war levels. Since 1988 the United States has dismantled more than 13,300 nuclear warheads and bombs, averaging 100 per month. As of May 1994, no country is targeted on a day-to-day basis by United States strategic forces.

The United States was the first State to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which, when it enters into force, will make a critical contribution to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Finally, the United States long ago ceased the production of plutonium and uranium for weapons purposes. It will continue to work to make this unilateral step a global obligation through the conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty negotiations, which resume at the Conference on Disarmament in January 1999.

These United States actions have made a direct contribution to reducing the nuclear threat, and we are firmly convinced that further step-by-step progress will be made.

This impractical proclamation, which uses the same old tired rhetoric, will do nothing to promote nuclear disarmament. The sponsor not only ignores the historic achievements of recent years, but, through its own nuclear testing, may actually have undermined the cause it claims to support.

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16/Rev.2 must be seen for what it is: an attempt to distract international attention from the real cause of increased nuclear danger in the world — the nuclear test explosions which two South Asian States conducted in May 1998.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): The revised draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.16 contains a number of elements which are unacceptable to France. It is based on the position of principle that nuclear weapons are in themselves dangerous to international security and contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter.

This is not France's point of view. Nuclear deterrence is an essential element of its defence policy. Furthermore, the draft resolution calls for a review of nuclear doctrines, a prerogative that falls solely under the national sovereignty of the nuclear-weapon States.

With respect to the alert and targeting levels to which the text refers in the context of intermediate measures, France has adjusted to the international context. Thus, in 1992, France reduced the alert level of its nuclear forces and in 1996 eliminated the land component of its nuclear forces and further reduced the alert level of its strategic maritime force. On 26 September 1997, the President of the Republic announced that, with the dismantling of ground-to-ground missiles on the Albion plateau, no nuclear weapon in France's deterrence force was thenceforth targeted.

I will not go into the other elements of the text that we find unacceptable, such as the inappropriate language on

nuclear disarmament and the selective reference to the advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice.

France could only vote against such a text.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): If no other delegation wishes to explain its vote, the Committee will now take up draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

An amendment to this draft resolution has been submitted in document A/C.1/53/L.54. I understand that Pakistan, following consultations, may wish to withdraw the amendment.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I should like to make a statement on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42 is entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". As my delegation stated earlier in its comments on that draft resolution, we see it as addressing the problem of nuclear non-proliferation more than it does the problem of nuclear disarmament. The very first operative paragraph of the draft resolution is indicative of the major objective that is being promoted.

We therefore submitted amendments to the draft resolution, not only this year, but also last year, in order to try to redress the imbalance which we see in the draft and to bring it towards contents that truly reflect its title concerning nuclear disarmament.

What we found even more offensive in the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42 was the reference in the second preambular paragraph to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) relating to the situation in South Asia. That resolution, as the Committee is by now well aware, is totally rejected by my country and we cannot accept its reflection in any resolution, in particular in any resolution which seeks to deal with nuclear disarmament. We are firmly of the view that the insertion of that reference into this draft resolution was inappropriate, unjust and counterproductive to the purposes of the draft resolution.

My delegation has had extensive consultations with the principal sponsor of this draft resolution, the delegation of Japan, both here and in capitals. We are appreciative of the fact that the Japanese Government and delegation have agreed to the deletion to the reference to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) from this draft resolution. The replacement paragraph, of course, is something that we also do not endorse, but our objection is not as categorical and total as it is to Security Council resolution 1172 (1998).

In the light of the flexibility displayed by the Japanese delegation and Government with regard to the reference to resolution 1172 (1998), my Government has instructed me, as a gesture of appreciation to the Japanese, not to press the amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.54 to a vote in the Committee.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): The amendment contained in document A/C.1/53/L.54 having been withdrawn, we shall now take action on the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1. The second preambular paragraph reads as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

> "*Bearing in mind* the recent nuclear tests which pose the challenge to international efforts to strengthen the global regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons".

(*spoke in French*)

I call on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): This preambular paragraph refers to recent nuclear tests. These recent nuclear tests, in our view, include not only the nuclear test explosions conducted in South Asia, but also the laboratory tests and subcritical tests that are being conducted by certain nuclear-weapon States. It is with that interpretation in mind that my delegation will be able to abstain rather than vote against this preambular paragraph.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Does any other delegation wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting? I see none.

A separate, recorded vote has been requested on the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear

disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", was introduced by the representative of Japan at this meeting. The sponsors of the draft resolution are listed in the draft resolution. The following countries have also become sponsors: Australia, Finland and Spain.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Zambia

Against:

India

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Israel, Nigeria, Pakistan

The second preambular paragraph was retained by 125 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Mexico for an explanation of vote.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation voted in favour of this preambular paragraph in its Spanish version, which speaks of the recent nuclear tests which pose "a" challenge to international efforts to strengthen the global regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The English version unfortunately says something different; it says that the tests pose "the" challenge, as if there were no other challenges. My delegation believes there are a number of challenges to the non-proliferation regime, including the impasse in the multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament. If we had had to vote on the English version, we would have abstained, but my delegation had an obligation to vote on the text in its own language, and the text in Spanish is correct.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): No other delegation wishes to speak at this stage.

(*spoke in English*)

We shall therefore now proceed to take action on operative paragraph 1, which reads:

> "*Reaffirms* the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and calls upon States not parties to the Treaty to accede to it without delay and without conditions".

(*spoke in French*)

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): I would like to announce that Portugal has become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I call on the representative of Pakistan for an explanation of position before a decision is taken on operative paragraph 1.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): Operative paragraph 1 is totally unacceptable to my delegation. As is well known, the subcontinent of South Asia has already been nuclearized. One State has declared itself a nuclear-weapon State and another has demonstrated that it has the capability

to explode nuclear weapons and manufacture them. In the circumstances, for the General Assembly to call for universal acceptance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by these countries is totally unrealistic. It is especially unrealistic and unacceptable that this demand should be made in this draft resolution, which deals with nuclear disarmament, ignoring at the outset that there are 30,000 nuclear weapons on red alert in the hands of the nuclear-weapon States, posing the primary danger of nuclear war and nuclear devastation to the world.

The call in the first operative paragraph for accession to the NPT betrays the fact that the true objective of this draft resolution, as of many other initiatives in the Committee, is to promote non-proliferation and not nuclear disarmament. Under the circumstances, my delegation will have no hesitation in voting against this operative paragraph.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As no other delegation wishes to speak, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel, Pakistan

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syrian Arab Republic

Paragraph 1 was retained by 136 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman: As no delegation wishes to explain its vote, we shall now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 as a whole. I shall first call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): In English, the last two words of the fifth subparagraph of the draft resolution are "their negotiations". The French translation is *la négociation*, but it should read *leurs négociations*, in the plural, and it is on that basis that we shall vote.

Mr. Abou-Hadid (Syrian Arab Republic) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation voted in favour of retaining operative paragraph 1, pressing the green button, but suddenly the light changed colour. I should be grateful if this malfunctioning of the machine could be rectified.

Mr. Shin (Republic of Korea): My delegation wishes to explain its position before the voting on draft resolution

A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons".

My Government has supported a practical and incremental approach to nuclear disarmament. While upholding the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, my delegation considers it important for the international community to proceed to that ultimate goal step by step on the basis of consensus and consensus-building. We are well aware that there is no quantum leap in disarmament, including nuclear disarmament. We believe that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 reflects, in a balanced way, the international community's impending tasks on nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, taking into account developments since the nuclear testing in South Asia.

My delegation attaches importance to the need to reinforce multilateral discussions of possible future steps on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. We consider that as the final guardian of nuclear disarmament the international community should vitalize the discussion on how to proceed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. We also believe that further efforts by the five nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally or through negotiations among them should be accelerated so as to make full use of the favourable strategic environment created by the end of the cold war.

For these reasons, we will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, and hope that it will be adopted with overwhelming support.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Once again this year my delegation will abstain in the vote on the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, because we believe that it does not succeed in establishing a minimal, universally acceptable basis for the path towards nuclear disarmament.

As we have said on many occasions since this text was introduced, in spite of its title it does not deal with matters related to nuclear disarmament but emphasizes selective issues and approaches having to do with horizontal nuclear proliferation. Therefore, if the amendments contained in document A/C.1/53/L.54 had been voted upon, Cuba would have voted in favour of them.

Partial approaches to the problem in no way help create the conditions necessary to advance towards the objective of nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, they are a perfect pretext for those who continue to advocate their obsolete nuclear military doctrines. We hope that this year's experience will be duly taken into account at the next session, and that in 1999 we will adopt a text on this subject that will truly meet the expectations of the international community.

Mr. Ri (Democratic People's Republic of Korea): As in previous years, my delegation will abstain on the draft resolution. Japan, as a victim of atomic bombs, should have pursued a policy of nuclear disarmament, in particular the total elimination of nuclear weapons. However, it continues to put itself under the protection of nuclear weapons and to allow nuclear bases on its territory, thus acknowledging the possible use of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, it hastens its pace towards nuclear armaments. The draft resolution, though titled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", lacks crucial elements for nuclear disarmament, in particular the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It simply advances the idea of non-proliferation, which is regarded by many delegations as being discriminatory. The draft resolution does not serve the ultimate goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It is for these reasons that my delegation will abstain.

Mr. Salazar (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Colombia considers that draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 refers more to non-proliferation measures than to nuclear disarmament measures. Although my delegation does not disagree with its contents, it will abstain, since the Committee is considering other draft resolutions which refer directly to nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): As there are no further speakers in explanation of vote before the voting, I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Central

African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bhutan, Colombia, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Israel, Myanmar, Pakistan

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 132 votes to none, with 11 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Li Changhe (China): China's position on nuclear disarmament is known to all. The delegation of China is in favour of the main thrust of the draft resolution contained in A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 and we therefore voted in favour of it. However, we have different views on some of the wording in the operative part of the draft resolution. China takes the consistent view that the countries with the largest and most sophisticated nuclear arsenals bear special responsibility for nuclear disarmament. They should implement as soon as possible existing nuclear disarmament agreements and on that basis further reduce their nuclear arsenals by a large margin. That would not only have a positive impact on international peace and security, but create favourable conditions for other nuclear-weapon countries to participate in the process of negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, renouncing first-use of nuclear weapons and nuclear-deterrence strategies are also important aspects of promoting nuclear disarmament. None of those points is reflected in the draft resolution.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): My delegation is pleased to have been able to support A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". This is an important draft resolution. There are already more than enough draft resolutions before the First Committee that permit delegations to take a Utopian position on nuclear disarmament. By contrast, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1 offers a more realistic vision in terms both of what has been accomplished to date and of the difficult task that lies ahead.

The United States is firmly committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons, but remains convinced that this can only be accomplished through a step-by-step process that takes political and international realities fully into account. The next multilateral step in that process is to negotiate a fissile material cut-off treaty. Consensus to start negotiations was not easily re-established, but we have at last begun initial work in the Conference on Disarmament. We look forward to beginning the hard work of serious negotiation early next year. We also look forward to further progress on nuclear disarmament on a bilateral and unilateral basis.

My delegation takes note of the call in paragraph 4 for multilateral discussions on possible future steps in nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, to which we look forward in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference.

Mrs. Bourgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): France is pleased to have been able to vote again this year, as it did on similar draft resolutions in 1997, 1996 and 1995, in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, introduced by Japan, "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". My country fully endorses this text, which reflects our position on and

our commitment to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

However, we regret the absence, for the first time, of any reference to unilateral efforts. This seems to reflect a failure to comprehend the scope and ambition of the measures announced by head of State of France in 1996. The disappearance of the land component of the nuclear force, the closure and dismantling of the nuclear research centre in Mururoa and the closure and dismantling of factories producing fissile materials for nuclear-weapon use are major decisions on the path towards the implementation of our commitments under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Their implementation requires considerable financial means and complex technical measures, which are being pursued over several years. The centre in Mururoa is closed and will be dismantled at the end of 1998. Dismantling of the ground-to-ground missiles on the Albion plateau and of the Hades missiles finished this year. Operations to close definitively the two fissile material installations, Pierrelatte and Marcoule, operations that are lengthy and costly, but irreversible, have begun.

The lack of any reference to that disarmament programme, which is being relentlessly pursued, seems to result from ignorance of the facts. It is true that we are living in a world in which the present reigns supreme and one piece of news quickly replaces another. But those of us who work in the long term cannot bow to the rules that govern the world of the media. Why disregard an effort whose announcement, it is true, was made two years ago, but whose implementation will of necessity take several years? If we are seeking new facts, why forget that the closing of Mururoa will have taken place by the end of this year and ignore the fact that France will be the only country with such facilities to get rid of them?

Another element in the draft resolution introduced by Japan requires clarification by my country. Paragraph 4 refers to "efforts by the five nuclear-weapon States to reduce their nuclear arsenals unilaterally and through their negotiations". France recognizes the magnitude of the efforts made by the States with the largest nuclear arsenals, and we welcome them, as proved by our support for the bilateral draft resolution. However, we note that the course taken by those two States is specific — on the one hand, because of the very large numbers involved, despite the importance of their commitments to reductions, and, on the other, because of the technical choices made, which in particular have so far excluded the dismantling of nuclear warheads. Finally, START II has not yet been ratified, and consequently the timetable for implementing the reductions decided upon is uncertain. In other words, as far as France is concerned, the reference to negotiations contained in the fifth subparagraph of paragraph 4 has to do with the process going on between the United States of America and Russia. My country reserves the right to assess whether and when efforts being made globally to eliminate nuclear weapons justify preferring a course other than the unilateral initiative that we have resolutely undertaken.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): My delegation did not vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, for the following reasons. The text overlaps, and is even in several respects at variance with, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.47, which was introduced by the delegation of Myanmar and adopted by the Committee, and which Algeria traditionally supports as a sponsor. The title of this draft does not seem to us to precisely reflect the contents of the document. Some elements are not in line with our view of nuclear disarmament, which accord entirely with the views of the Non-Aligned Movement. The conceptual approach, giving pride of place to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, does not seem to us at the present stage to be the right one. For all those reasons, my delegation was unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution. By voting in favour of the second preambular paragraph, whose French translation does not, unfortunately, reflect the English version, my delegation would include all nuclear tests, of whatever kind.

Mr. Deghani (Iran): My delegation supports the basic thrust of the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.24/Rev.1, sponsored by the delegation of Japan. However, we abstained in the voting on it because its substance is not consistent with its title. The draft resolution purports to be a nuclear disarmament initiative, but its elements focus solely on non-proliferation issues. Accordingly, my delegation believes that in its present form it still needs some improvements if it is to be relevant to its title.

The Chairman: As no other delegations wish to speak in explanation of vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, the Committee will now consider draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

Mr. MacFhionnbhairr (Ireland): I wish to make a statement before the Committee begins to take action on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 and to introduce the text contained in the revised draft.

In their interventions before the Committee, and from the outset, the sponsors of the draft resolution have promoted dialogue with all delegations wishing to contribute to the further elaboration of this text, and they have engaged in a constructive dialogue over the past five weeks with many delegations. This process has resulted in the enrichment of the draft, which is now set down in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

This draft, upon which the Committee is now about to act, does not represent an approach of one delegation. Its sponsors represent the variety of traditions which inform the debate on nuclear disarmament here in the First Committee, at the Conference on Disarmament, in the review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), and elsewhere.

The sponsors do not expect that they have achieved the definitive determination of the nature or process of nuclear disarmament. The draft proposes an agenda, which is wholly realizable, for which the context and mechanisms are for the most part already to hand, and which can be infinitely developed.

The dialogue which the sponsors have held on this draft resolution — both here and in capitals — has demonstrated that among Governments there is a steady awakening to the fact that now is the time to move forward together to eliminate nuclear weapons.

It has not been easy for the sponsors to develop such a text, and — as the delegations which have engaged with us will testify — the balance we have sought to achieve in our search for a middle ground, drawing together the international community as a whole, has not been easy either. However, the resulting draft laid before delegations for adoption represents a call for action and the parameters for an agenda required to achieve that goal, which we all declare to be ours.

The sponsors recommend the text for adoption by the Committee.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): Separate, recorded votes have been requested on paragraphs 8 and 17 of the draft resolution. Paragraph 8 reads as follows:

(*spoke in English*)

> "*Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to this instrument".

Does any delegation wish to explain its vote before a decision is taken on paragraph 8?

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): This paragraph in effect repeats the provisions of the first paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1.53/L.42/Rev.1, which we have just adopted.

My delegation has explained that, in the conditions of nuclearization of South Asia, it is unrealistic and unacceptable for the Committee to adopt provisions calling on States to adhere unconditionally to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). My country will not do so, and therefore we cannot accept this call. We will therefore vote against paragraph 8.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): My delegation will not participate in the votes on individual paragraphs of the draft resolution. In our view, the overall thrust of the draft resolution is fundamentally flawed, and thus changing individual paragraphs would not meet our concern.

Mr. Abdullayev (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): The Russian delegation perceives the draft as a single whole, and therefore we see no purpose in voting on fragments of it, although some of its parts could accord with our national position. For this reason, we shall not participate in the vote on separate paragraphs.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): As I had an opportunity to explain when the draft resolution was introduced, its general inspiration seems to us unsound. For this reason, France will not participate in the separate votes on two paragraphs whose adoption or rejection will not change anything in the general spirit of a text which as a whole is counter-productive.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We shall now proceed to the vote on operative paragraph 8, the text of which I read out a short while ago.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", was introduced by the representative of Ireland at this meeting. Slovenia has withdrawn its sponsorship of the draft resolution. In addition to the sponsors named in

document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, an additional sponsor is named in document A/C.1/53/INF/2/Add.3.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel, Pakistan

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cuba, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Slovenia

Operative paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 was retained by 132 votes to 3, with 4 abstentions.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We shall now take a decision on operative paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

"*Calls for* the conclusion of an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States Party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".

I call first on the representative of Pakistan, who wishes to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): As is well known, my delegation is in favour of the conclusion of effective international instruments to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. However, we believe that any effort to restrict such assurances only to the parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is discriminatory and therefore not acceptable. Under the circumstances, my delegation will abstain in the vote on operative paragraph 17.

The Chairman: The Committee will now proceed to the vote on operative paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea,

Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Abstaining:

Cuba, India, Israel, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Slovenia

Operative paragraph 17 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 was retained by 130 votes to 1, with 6 abstentions.

The Chairman: The Committee will now take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 as a whole.

I call now on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of vote before the voting.

Mrs. Burgois (France) (*interpretation from French*): France will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

During the debate I explained why we view this draft resolution as unrealistic and inappropriate. It is unrealistic because it disregards the facts, especially the considerable bilateral and unilateral efforts made by nuclear-weapon Powers in the context of their commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). It is inappropriate because it seeks, by proposing a new conference and a new agenda, to call into question the achievements of the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to cast doubt on the strengthened review process, to which we are firmly committed.

Moreover, a future special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament will provide an opportunity for comprehensive consideration of all disarmament issues. France would want the special session to take place in 2001.

To continue the process of nuclear disarmament on the basis of article VI of the NPT requires serious, patient work based on a realistic assessment of the risks and threats we face. In that connection, it is unacceptable to us that the draft resolution calls into question the principle of nuclear deterrence. Deterrence remains the fundamental element of French defence strategy and an assurance against any threat to our vital interests, no matter what its source or form. It is also a fundamental element in the doctrine of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

France is determined to fulfil its commitments under article VI of the NPT: putting an end to the nuclear arms race once and for all, negotiating effective measures of nuclear disarmament and working towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control. Because of our desire for international peace and security we must omit none of these elements. For the present, a priority goal must be to negotiate a fissile materials cut-off treaty.

For these reasons my delegation will vote against draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, which runs counter to those principles.

Ms. Martinic (Argentina) (*interpretation from Spanish*): My delegation wishes to comment on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda". Today we see the building of an interdependent world in which the dominant trend is towards integration. Overcoming poverty, economic stagnation; achieving social justice; defending human dignity and the environment; promoting scientific and technical cooperation as a stimulus to development: these are but a few of the problems and goals shared by the entire international community. We must find fair, lasting solutions to these problems.

In this context, Argentina believes that we must try to develop a comprehensive view of international security which includes, among other elements, a decision to deal with the problems of disarmament with determination; the adoption of increased transparency and confidence-building measures; and beginning a multilateral process that will promote international cooperation with renewed dynamism.

With the Treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Bangkok and Pelindaba and the Antarctic Treaty, the southern hemisphere has become a nuclear-free zone. Today we

view with satisfaction the fact that other regions have also opted for zones free from the use or threat of the use of nuclear weapons, which undermines the legitimacy of such weapons. At the same time, countries with nuclear weapons on their territory have either destroyed them or moved them outside their borders. These countries could not support those weapons and showed the way for others in the common search for a world free of weapons of mass destruction.

The United States of America and the Russian Federation, by agreeing on two treaties to reduce and limit strategic offensive weapons, START I and START II, and the United Kingdom unilaterally, are continuing to make efforts in favour of nuclear disarmament. We welcome the progress being made by some of the five nuclear Powers. At the same time, we encourage the nuclear Powers to continue to pursue nuclear disarmament, with a view to completely eliminating this type of weapon. Notwithstanding the positive balance of collective nuclear disarmament and security efforts, the disturbing risk of nuclear proliferation persists.

Therefore, my delegation cannot support draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. In its current form it would give the impression of acknowledging a new category of States — States that are nuclear-weapons capable. This is unacceptable, because it runs counter to the position that my country has adopted and continues to adhere to in disarmament and non-proliferation forums. Continuing this mistaken approach could create unnecessary problems, especially in the case of those countries that, having acquired the technical capacity, have wisely opted to limit themselves.

For all those reasons, the delegation of Argentina will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Mr. Benítez Verson (Cuba) (*interpretation from Spanish*): Cuba will vote in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, because we consider that, as part of a larger group of actions and initiatives, it can contribute to promoting the priority goal of nuclear disarmament. The mere fact that it advocates a new agenda towards a nuclear-weapon-free world gives it a certain weight, which must be duly taken into account.

At the same time, our appreciation of the value of the text and our positive vote should not be interpreted as automatic approval of all the ideas it contains. As we told the principal sponsors at the appropriate time, some of the explicit or implicit ideas in the draft resolution will require in the future reformulation, at the very least, and some may even have to be eliminated if we truly wish to create an agenda with a solid foundation.

These are some of the reasons why my delegation abstained in the separate votes on operative paragraphs 8 and 17. Our position of principle regarding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is well known. I therefore need not dwell on that subject, nor on the reasons why we were unable to support the appeal in operative paragraph 8 for the universality of a Treaty which we think is in essence discriminatory and selective.

With regard to operative paragraph 17, Cuba's position is in line with that set forth in the principal documents of the Non-Aligned Movement. Security assurances for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons must be universal and unconditional. Cuba therefore cannot agree that they should be restricted to States that are parties to a specific treaty.

Cuba will support every effort to bring about nuclear disarmament. In that context, we will duly take into account the text to be adopted today.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): Since the United States has already spoken at some length on the reasons for its opposition to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48, I will be brief. We have two major concerns. First, this draft resolution calls into question a fundamental doctrine of our defence and that of our allies. Secondly, far from advancing the nuclear disarmament agenda, it will in all probability delay it.

As to the first point, the representative of one of the original sponsors could not have been clearer when, in response to a statement by our British colleague, he said that the draft resolution was intended to call into question the doctrine of deterrence. This doctrine has stood the United States — and, indeed, the world — in good stead for the past half century. It has kept the peace and it ended the cold war. Along with our allies, we reviewed it recently and concluded that it should remain the basis for our defence. I note that Article 51 of the Charter gives us all the right to exercise and take measures for individual and collective self-defence, and I want to make it very clear that my country will continue to exercise this right.

Beyond this, the sponsors of this draft resolution seem to believe that the doctrine of deterrence is a major obstacle to more rapid progress on nuclear disarmament, and,

conversely, that if only it were abandoned the nuclear Powers would disarm rapidly. We disagree. Nuclear weapons and nuclear disarmament do not exist in a vacuum. The nuclear disarmament process can take place only in the context of national security interests. The dramatic progress we have made to date has been possible because of changes in the international security climate, even as i. has contributed to the increased stability and security that make further progress possible.

The United States intends to continue to move towards greater security and stability at lower levels of weapons in a step-by-step process towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. But security and stability would be empty concepts without nuclear deterrence. Let me be perfectly clear: no one will make nuclear disarmament occur faster by suggesting that a fundamental basis of our national security for more than 50 years is illegitimate.

As to the second point, we have already noted that — far from a new agenda — this draft resolution contains a mix of items already on the arms control disarmament agenda: proposals of which de-alerting is one which we have already considered and rejected, and suggestions such as a call for a nuclear disarmament conference that will lead nowhere. Indeed, if the purpose of this draft resolution is to speed up the nuclear disarmament process, it can only be counter-productive.

By lecturing the nuclear-weapon States about their inadequacies while neglecting to criticize the actions of States that have recently conducted nuclear-weapons tests and have thereby damaged the global non-proliferation regime, the draft resolution will hardly encourage the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) or START II. Indeed, it will only give aid and comfort to those who are sceptical about multilateral arms control and disarmament in general. By seeming to require a new commitment to nuclear disarmament as a prerequisite to further steps to reduce nuclear weapons, it will only provide an excuse for delay.

Finally, by proclaiming the need for a new agenda and for still another conference on nuclear disarmament, it calls into question the agendas on which the international community already agrees, such as principles and objectives for disarmament and non-proliferation. It also intends to undermine existing forums, such as the Conference on Disarmament, the enhanced Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) review process, the First Committee and other United Nations disarmament machinery, including a possible fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We do not understand how this would promote speedier progress on disarmament.

In our view, this draft resolution is still another example of feel-good arms control. The proponents may believe they will accomplish something, but the draft resolution destroys no weapons, prevents no proliferation and makes the world no safer. My delegation hopes that many of our friends and allies will decide they cannot support this unnecessary and potentially harmful draft resolution. The United States, for its part, will continue to pursue meaningful measures to reduce and eliminate weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, as well as preventing the proliferation of such weapons.

Mr. Soutar (United Kingdom): I have asked for the floor to set out the position of my delegation with regard to draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

The United Kingdom is wholly committed to nuclear disarmament and to our obligations under article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). This commitment has been restated many times and given practical expression by the measures undertaken in our strategic defence review, which included significant reductions in, and unprecedented transparency about, the British nuclear deterrent, and, for example, by our ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

The 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference agreed principles and objectives setting the next steps towards nuclear disarmament. We do not believe that the sponsors of the draft resolution, all of which are parties to the NPT, are, by setting out a different agenda, making a constructive contribution. The agreed next step is the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty, for which an Ad Hoc Committee has been established in Geneva. We will work hard for the success of these negotiations.

The draft resolution also advocates measures which were examined in our strategic defence review and which we concluded are, at the present time, inconsistent with the maintenance of a credible minimum deterrent. The draft resolution neither condemns nor even mentions the nuclear tests carried out by India and Pakistan. It is difficult to see how it could be reconciled with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1172 (1998) on those tests.

The United Kingdom remains ready to support any measure that will make a practical contribution to

advancing nuclear disarmament. This draft resolution does not. We shall accordingly vote against it.

Mr. Akram (Pakistan): I would like to take this opportunity to explain Pakistan's approach to and position on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Pakistan strongly supports the objective of nuclear disarmament, and we believe that this draft resolution makes a sincere effort to try to identify the possible elements and approaches that could promote the objectives of nuclear disarmament.

The draft resolution is more fair and equitable than the one we have just voted on — A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1. It is, however, less categorical and clear in its perspective than the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.47, sponsored by Myanmar and other non-aligned countries, which the Committee has also adopted.

We see the positive aspect of this draft resolution as being a recognition of the link between nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and also a recognition of the realities of the existence of five nuclear-weapon States and certain other States which also have nuclear capability or now possess nuclear weapons.

However, the demands which have been made in the draft resolution on these respective categories of States are somewhat unclear and unequal. Whereas the nuclear-weapon States are asked to conduct negotiations in accordance with article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the two major nuclear Powers are urged to pursue the START talks, to integrate these into a seamless process of negotiations between all five nuclear-weapon States, and to accept a de-alerting of their nuclear weapons.

On the other hand, the nuclear-weapons-capable States are asked to reverse their programmes, immediately accept the NPT, accept full-scope safeguards and take measures which are unrelated to their security environment. My delegation does not believe that the steps that are required to be taken by any State — be it nuclear-weapon, nuclear-weapon-capable or non-nuclear — should be unrelated to the security environment and the security compulsions which that State confronts.

In the region of South Asia, we now have a situation in which, as a result of the nuclear-weapon explosions, as a result of the declaration by one State of nuclear-weapon status, and as a result of an acute conventional imbalance, my country is obliged to rely on the deterrence effects of nuclear capability to prevent aggression. Therefore, like the representative of France, I would like to say that deterrence remains a fundamental element of our defence strategy.

The representative of the United States has further elaborated on this concept of deterrence and has underlined that this concept has preserved the peace for 50 years. We trust that South Asia, which has seen three wars in the last 50 years, will see no further wars in the next 50 years.

We too have the right, under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, to self-defence. That is the right which we exercised when we conducted our nuclear explosions of 28 and 30 May. It is therefore quite strange that the nuclear-weapon States should nitpick on this draft resolution because it does not refer to these tests. If there were such a reference, it would be in the category of the draft resolution adopted by this Committee last night — the unfair and discriminatory draft resolution on South Asia. That would be also in the category of disarmament measures which are meant to make one feel good but achieve nothing.

It is unfortunate that, due to the unacceptable provisions contained in draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, my delegation will be obliged to vote against the draft resolution as a whole. We nevertheless appreciate and understand the initiative taken by its sponsors and wish to state this publicly, although we disagree strongly with some of the elements that they have included.

The Chairman: We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote before the vote.

I give the floor to the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now proceed to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Colombia,

Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Samoa, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Armenia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Hungary, India, Israel, Latvia, Lithuania, Monaco, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Bhutan, Canada, China, Croatia, Denmark, Micronesia (Federated States of), Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, Myanmar, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine

Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 97 votes to 19, with 32 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Guinea informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): I shall now call on those members who wish to make statements in explanation of vote.

Mr. Millim (Luxembourg) (*interpretation from French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the three Benelux countries — Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg — as well as Denmark, Spain, Finland, Iceland and Portugal.

It was with regret that these eight countries abstained in the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, proposing a new agenda for nuclear disarmament. I say "regret", because this draft resolution contains many positive elements to which we could subscribe. We too call on States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); to conclude full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency and to conclude additional protocols to those agreements; and to sign and ratify, unconditionally and without delay, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. We, too, believe that it is important that the Conference on Disarmament pursue and conclude, without delay, the negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. We, too, support the proposal that the Conference on Disarmament establish a subsidiary body to deal with nuclear disarmament — a proposal similar to that made by Belgium a few months ago. We, too, continue to encourage and support the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones everywhere possible.

We eight countries thus subscribe unequivocally to the basic objective of nuclear disarmament: the total elimination of such weapons. With others, we are tirelessly exploring every avenue that might lead to that end. But, to arrive there, the consistency of the draft resolution must equal the determination of its authors. That does not seem to be the case here. Three imperfections in particular should be emphasized.

The first relates to the alarmist tone of the text, based on an analysis that we do not share. By concluding with the need for a new agenda, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 reveals dissatisfaction with the previous one and a lack of faith in its future. Our countries do not share this view. We are pleased to have directly benefitted from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. We appreciate the results of the START process and have confidence in its future. Neighbours of France and Great Britain, we draw satisfaction from their unilateral decisions in regard to nuclear disarmament. We encourage them and China to participate in a plurilateral mechanism, as mentioned in the eleventh preambular paragraph of the draft resolution. It is inaccurate and dangerous to reject the existing agenda on the grounds that it has neither born fruit nor promises to bear any.

Our eight countries believe that progress on nuclear disarmament can only be achieved by means of the processes now under way — processes founded on article

VI of the NPT and inspired by the 1995 principles and objectives. We cannot support the proposal for an international conference on nuclear disarmament while we have on the near horizon the year 2000 Review Conference of the NPT and another special session of the Assembly on disarmament. The present agenda has demonstrated its value, we find it appropriate, and we have not ceased to believe that it holds promise for the future.

Finally, it is a matter of concern that a draft resolution of no fewer than 37 paragraphs says nothing about a major event, the nuclear tests in South Asia, except — and this only makes us more cautious — to introduce, in paragraph 7, an unacceptable ambiguity regarding the status of the "three States that are nuclear-weapons capable". For the States parties to the NPT there can be only the categories of States defined by the Treaty: nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

I would like to conclude by again emphasizing the firm intention of the Benelux countries, as well as of Denmark, Spain, Finland, Iceland and Portugal, to support any approach that might advance the cause of nuclear disarmament. Without doubt the road is long, but it is clear. It does not seem desirable to call into question the existing processes, which have been effective in the past and hold promise for the future.

Mr. Li Changhe (China) (*interpretation from Chinese*): China fully understands the international community's desire for nuclear disarmament and the importance it accords to the question. China has always supported a total ban on nuclear weapons and their complete destruction so that humanity may be freed from the threat of nuclear war and so that a nuclear-weapon-free world may soon be built.

As a nuclear-weapon State, China has never evaded its own responsibility for nuclear disarmament, and it is ready to fulfil its obligations. From the very day it acquired nuclear weapons, China has undertaken never to be the first to use such weapons, under any circumstances. It has also undertaken unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against any non-nuclear-weapon State or nuclear-weapon-free zone.

China has never participated in any nuclear arms race, and it is against the doctrine of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons. Our position is an important contribution that China is making in its own way to the final goal of a complete ban on, and thorough destruction of, nuclear weapons.

It is our view that the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) does not imply that the nuclear-weapon States can possess nuclear weapons for ever. They should intensify their efforts to fulfil their obligations under article VI of the NPT. Countries with the largest and most sophisticated nuclear weapons should continue to drastically reduce their nuclear weapons, renounce the doctrine of nuclear deterrence and stop research and development on outer space weapons and missile defence systems that would destabilize the global balance, so that favourable conditions may be created for other nuclear-weapon States to participate in the negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament.

The sponsors of the draft resolution consulted the Chinese delegation many times and listened to our views. For that we would like to express our appreciation. China favours the objective of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 — namely, to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world — and we favour some of the steps mentioned in it. For example, it calls upon nuclear-weapon States to review their nuclear policies and to negotiate and conclude an internationally legally binding instrument to provide security assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States, and calls for the enhancement of the NPT's universality.

We have also taken note of some other measures in the draft resolution. However, given the great disparities in the nuclear forces of the nuclear-weapon States, and given that a few countries still cling to the doctrine of nuclear deterrence based on the first use of nuclear weapons, it is premature to ask all the nuclear-weapon States to adopt the same measures.

It was for those reasons that the Chinese delegation abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We have one hour left to conclude our work. I therefore encourage delegations to be brief.

Mr. Sungar (Turkey): I would like to explain the considerations which led my Government to cast a "No" vote on the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

It is true that the international community aspires to a world free of nuclear weapons. It is equally true that nuclear weapons cannot simply be wished away. Systematic and progressive efforts on the part of nuclear-weapon States

are essential to the reduction of nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating them, within the framework of general and complete disarmament. Moreover, the existence of a broad agenda and its step-by-step realization would demonstrate to the international community that the obligations and commitments undertaken by all States are being fulfilled.

As a State party to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), we firmly believe not only that we have a broad agenda, as contained in the principles and objectives document agreed at the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, but also that progress has been achieved, not least by the agreement reached in the Conference on Disarmament on the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which was identified as the next step following the conclusion of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT).

Turkey is convinced that the NPT strengthened review process is the appropriate forum to determine the necessary steps after the conclusion of the fissile material cut-off treaty and to set new objectives on non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. For this reason, we fail to see the utility of yet another international conference, as proposed in operative paragraph 14 of this draft resolution, at a time when the international community is adopting cost-saving measures.

The draft resolution that the Committee has just adopted states in its fifth preambular paragraph that

> "the Nuclear-Weapon States have not fulfilled speedily and totally their commitment to the elimination of their nuclear weapons".

In our view, sharing this assessment on the one hand, and voting in favour of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 on the other, would be inconsistent. We are convinced that significant steps have already been taken, as outlined in resolution 52/38 M of 1997, entitled "Bilateral nuclear arms negotiations and nuclear disarmament", which the international community recognized and endorsed overwhelmingly. The same considerations prompted us to co-sponsor draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.49/Rev.1 this year as well, and it was adopted yesterday.

Despite our objection to the main thrust of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, it incorporates language that we could support. Besides those paragraphs that were put to a separate vote, there are some other paragraphs dealing with the START process, IAEA safeguards, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the NPT strengthened review process, and nuclear-weapon-free zones which we associate ourselves with. Had these paragraphs been put to a separate vote, we would have voted in favour.

In sum, Turkey's negative vote should in no way be construed as our opposition to the lofty goals of non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, we believe that these objectives, as defined by the NPT, could be achieved by the active participation and contribution of all States — nuclear and non-nuclear.

Mr. Moher (Canada): After a period of very careful, intense and high-level consideration and consultation, Canada abstained on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. For several weeks Canada worked constructively with the draft resolution's sponsors. In the course of this work, we were gratified by their determination and by their clear commitment to build the broadest possible base of support. Canada would obviously, also, like to see that objective achieved. While it has come a long way in this direction, on balance our conclusion is that there is still more to be achieved in that respect.

This Committee is well aware of Canada's commitment to arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation as a core dimension of our broader pursuit of greater international peace and security. It is also aware of our unequivocal commitment to all aspects of the nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation regime — a regime founded on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and its associated instruments.

The Canadian people are committed to nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. In recognition of this commitment and of the challenges we face as we approach the new millennium, the Canadian Parliament has undertaken a study of Canada's nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation policy. Its report will likely be presented in the next few weeks. The Canadian Government will wish to take that report into account, as it continues to promote the objectives of its arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation policy. Ultimately, the Canadian Government did not wish by today's vote to prejudge that process.

As delegations are aware, some countries have raised strong objections to the draft resolution; *inter alia*, these objections relate to their impressions that the draft resolution is rooted in "old-speak", that it does not adequately credit progress made in nuclear disarmament

and that it makes no mention of the nuclear tests in India and Pakistan.

As a committed Member of the United Nations and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Canada has examined each of these arguments very carefully. At the same time, we are deeply concerned that the NPT-based nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime is now under serious strain. From this perspective, we see the new agenda draft resolution as a timely and pointed reminder of the urgent need for further progress on both these fronts.

While we recognize that progress has been made on the nuclear disarmament front, we think there is both room and an imperative to make more. In the same manner, we have made it clear that nuclear proliferation is unacceptable. Canada accordingly looks forward to pursuing these issues, actively and forcefully, in the coming weeks and months with our friends and with our allies.

We note that the draft resolution calls for a review at next year's session of the General Assembly. Canada, for one, looks forward to this review and hopes that all those engaged in this debate will take maximum advantage of the intervening period to pursue the goal of the broadest based support, demonstrating a common resolve to sustain the NPT-based nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime in the face of pressing and potent challenges.

Mrs. Kunadi (India): My delegation has requested the floor to explain its position on the draft resolution just adopted, contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

My delegation has not commented substantively on this draft resolution on a previous occasion. Yesterday, Sir, you imposed time limits on speakers. Today, you are obviously in a benevolent mood and I, like others, will take advantage of this.

India positively assessed the joint ministerial declaration issued in Dublin on behalf of eight countries on 9 June this year. There are now, we understand, only seven of the original sponsors. Over the years, India has worked closely with several of the sponsors on disarmament issues in various forums.

We have noted that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 goes far beyond the parameters of the joint ministerial declaration. It includes extraneous elements and formulations that were adopted in other forums. We reject prescriptive approaches concerning security issues, such as those contained in operative paragraph 7, which are not only extraneous to this draft resolution, but also completely divorced from reality on the ground. The draft resolution also tends to base policy recommendations on fallacious concepts, such as the following in paragraph 7:

> "those three States that are nuclear-weapons capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)".

This concept is analytically hollow and does not correspond to reality.

The reference to a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia not only borders on the absurd, but also calls into question one of the fundamental guiding principles for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, namely, that the arrangements for such zones should be freely arrived at among States of the region concerned. The deliberations of this Committee have once again demonstrated that there is no such consensus on the proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia.

On operative paragraph 17, India abstained in the voting, as we do not see negative security assurances within the restrictive framework of the NPT.

Given the omnibus nature of this draft resolution, there is a surprising lack of any mention of the doctrines of first use of nuclear weapons which have been inherited from the cold-war years. Similarly, the draft resolution ignores efforts by certain countries, unconstrained by a partial treaty banning nuclear testing, to refine and modernize nuclear weapons for retention well into the next millennium. The ongoing efforts to build ballistic-missile defences could well have an unsettling effect on the delicate global strategic balance.

There is an intriguing absence of any reference to the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, which remains the only consensus document on disarmament adopted by the international community as a whole. The Final Document contains a Programme of Action which remains only partially implemented. Any agenda for the future would necessarily have to take into account the starting premise for global disarmament contained in the Final Document.

The sponsors of this draft resolution sought to portray its recommendations as intended to revive some of the core understandings of the NPT. My delegation's views on that Treaty are well known, and we sympathize with those that

have been striving unsuccessfully over the years, including at the second session this year of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, to get the self-anointed five nuclear-weapon States to make unequivocal commitments to nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution is silent on the multifarious sources of proliferation which the NPT has failed to stem. We believe that the success of any international effort such as this, however worthy and energetic in its own right, would be limited by the unequal and discriminatory framework of obligations enshrined in the NPT. The new agenda cannot succeed in the old framework of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

My delegation has noted carefully the reactions of certain delegations to this draft resolution. The nuclear-weapon States, which have yet to provide an unequivocal commitment to the speedy and total elimination of nuclear weapons, as called for in operative paragraph 1, have sought to justify their opposition to this draft resolution by citing the lack of any critical reference to the nuclear tests that took place in May this year. This is not a draft resolution on nuclear testing. Therefore, the statements of such delegations, which we reject, are evidence of their desire to use the tests that took place in South Asia as an excuse to oppose any proposal that would invite them to undertake unequivocal commitments to nuclear disarmament.

The commitment of India to nuclear disarmament, unlike that of the other nuclear-weapon States, remains firm and we remain ready to contribute to universal nuclear disarmament in a non-discriminatory framework. India would have preferred this draft resolution to include proposals contained in the Final Document of the twelfth summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, representing five sixths of humanity, held in South Africa, one of the sponsors of this draft resolution. This Final Document includes concrete proposals towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, particularly the call for an international conference with the objective of reaching agreement on the phased elimination of nuclear weapons. Similarly, we would have preferred the designation of the use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, as a crime against humanity within the purview of the International Criminal Court. However, India did not press ahead with its amendments, in deference to the wishes of some of the sponsors of this draft resolution and in the hope that these points would find a suitable place in the resolution in the future.

In conclusion, although my delegation also shares the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the need to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world, we remain unconvinced of the utility of an exercise bound by flawed and discriminatory approaches of the NPT. We therefore cast a negative vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Balboni Acqua (Italy): I am taking the floor to explain the position of the Government of Italy on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Italy decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution. Being determined to pursue nuclear disarmament globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating all nuclear weapons, the Government of Italy shares the motivation of the draft resolution. We believe that there is a need to intensify the international efforts in this field, in particular by exploiting the momentum created by the achievements to date and the future promise of the START process. However, the draft resolution raises some concerns which relate to the means it envisages rather than to the ends it aims at.

In other words, Italy is not convinced that the cause of nuclear disarmament, which we fully support, would be advanced by a draft resolution which puts forward a concept not consistent with the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and which considers strategies which might undermine the Treaty's effectiveness and credibility. Moreover, we believe that a more balanced text, better reflecting the results already achieved in the area of nuclear disarmament, would have been instrumental in intensifying the dialogue between nuclear and non-nuclear States. Italy, for its part, intends to continue to firmly pursue this goal, in line with the perception shared by its Government, Parliament and public opinion that nuclear disarmament is the primary responsibility of nuclear-weapon States but is also in the undeniable interest of the entire international community.

For the reasons I have stressed, Italy decided to abstain, in order to avoid any misunderstanding with regard to our commitment to nuclear disarmament, but also to voice our concern as to the means envisaged by a draft resolution whose goal we share.

Mr. Kolby (Norway): I have asked for the floor to explain Norway's vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation have been long-standing Norwegian policy objectives. It is necessary to halt the spread of nuclear weapons and to significantly reduce and ultimately eliminate existing nuclear arsenals. Disarmament in general is the responsibility of all States, but when it comes to nuclear disarmament the nuclear-weapon States bear the primary responsibility. It is essential to secure their active participation in any nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation endeavours.

Norway supports the reasoning behind the draft resolution. There is a need for initiatives which can revitalize our way of dealing with nuclear issues multilaterally. We also share its ultimate goal of the global elimination of nuclear weapons and the desire to approach these issues in a more practical and constructive way. We are, however, not convinced that this draft resolution in its present form will be as conducive to a more constructive and dynamic climate for multilateral discussions in this field as we would have liked. We have in the discussions pointed out several problematic elements in the text and formulations that we cannot agree with.

In essence, there are five main reasons why Norway was not in a position to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

First, the language in the preambular as well as the operative part is too confrontational and categorical regarding the nuclear-weapon States and may not contribute to a strengthened multilateral dialogue on nuclear disarmament issues.

Secondly, the draft resolution does not duly recognize the significant steps that had in fact been taken by nuclear-weapon States in the area of nuclear disarmament. We would like to see the realities reflected more clearly, and believe that the draft resolution would then be more likely to facilitate a climate for further improvement in this field.

Thirdly, in our view the draft resolution reflects a lack of balance, in the sense that it is critical of the way in which the nuclear-weapon States fulfil their nuclear disarmament obligations, while it does not properly address the recent nuclear tests in South Asia.

Fourthly, we believe that an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation to complement efforts being made in other settings, as proposed by the resolution, would be redundant and that such a conference would have the potential to derail and undermine the strengthened review process of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

Fifthly, the language of the draft resolution addressing the possible role of the Conference on Disarmament on questions related to nuclear disarmament and nuclear arms control is too ambiguous. Like other delegations, we do not believe that the Conference on Disarmament should be mandated to negotiate nuclear weapons reductions. Multilateral negotiations would only weaken the responsibility of the nuclear-weapon States to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament. On the other hand, we hope that the Conference on Disarmament can serve as a forum for exchange and use of information on all relevant issues in this field. We find that more precise language on this point, which clearly excludes the Conference on Disarmament from any role in negotiating nuclear forces, is called for.

Mr. Campbell (Australia): Australia was not able to support the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. In essence, we believe the path the sponsors are advocating towards an ideal which we share, a world free of nuclear weapons, is not practical or realistic. Regrettably, there are no short cuts where the balance to verified drawdown of nuclear-weapon stocks and systems is concerned. For who would want to add new uncertainties and insecurities to the nuclear dispensation the cold war bequeathed to us?

Moreover, we do not accept what appears to be the premise of the new agenda draft resolution — that the current agenda, the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime as we know it, has failed or is in dire need of reanimation. In fact, thanks to the dedication and hard work of many States over the past 30-odd years, the regime is in impressively good shape, has evolved to meet new needs and challenges and has secured the allegiance of the quasi-totality of the planet. This has made possible remarkable progress in establishing and strengthening the instruments that underpin and embody that regime and, since the end of the cold war, in achieving deep cuts in the numbers of nuclear weapons in the world.

The number of States adhering to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is not only larger than this body itself, but continues to grow, including in this year. Certainly there is no room for complacency, as other events this year have shown, but neither have we hit an iceberg.

The approach of the draft resolution is also flawed in that it proposes a new international conference on nuclear disarmament with an ill-defined agenda which we believe will distract attention and energies away from the priority tasks of strengthening the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, achieving progress in the new negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, ensuring a successful year 2000 review conference of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and maintaining the good progress achieved to date in nuclear disarmament, notably under the START process.

Finally, Australia remains committed to the twin goals of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, as enshrined in the NPT, and will remain active in the pursuit of practical and realistic steps to ensure the Treaty's full implementation.

Mr. Seibert (Germany): Since the reasons for and against draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 have already been set out in great detail, I shall heed your advice, Mr. Chairman, and be very brief.

Germany abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. The Federal Republic of Germany welcomes in the draft resolution the commitment to nuclear disarmament, with the goal of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons, but believes that this goal can best be achieved through the speedy continuation of the step-by-step process of nuclear disarmament.

The Chairman: That statement was indeed very brief. I call on Japan, and hope that it will follow suit.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): I am not sure that I can, Mr. Chairman.

As a nation that experienced the devastation of nuclear bombs, Japan really shares the strong desire to seek a world free from nuclear weapons, the desire that is behind the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon free world: the need for a new agenda". Thus, my delegation had extensive consultations with the sponsors of the draft resolution, which I believe contains many elements, particularly in the operative paragraphs, that we can share.

In fact, there are a number of common ingredients in this draft resolution and the nuclear disarmament draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/53/L.42/Rev.1, which we put forward and which was adopted a few minutes ago.

Consequently, my delegation's decision to abstain on the current draft resolution was not easy. We were obliged to do so as, in our view, it went just a little too far and contained some elements that are a little premature, in spite of the many elements we share.

For example, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 speaks, in the second preambular paragraph, of "the prospect of the indefinite possession of nuclear weapons" and says, in the fifth preambular paragraph, that "the Nuclear-Weapon States have not fulfilled speedily and totally their commitment to the elimination of their nuclear weapons". The fact is that the nuclear-weapon States have committed themselves, in written documents, to the elimination of nuclear weapons. They have also already achieved a significant reduction in their nuclear arsenals, and there are commitments to further reductions, even though these may not have been to the satisfaction of those who expect even more.

My delegation believes that, given the complexity and difficult nature of the issue, we should try harder to nurture a new consensus involving the nuclear-weapon States, so that we can make steady, step-by-step progress towards the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. Japan believes that the draft resolution it proposed, which was adopted today, is an effort in this direction. From this point of view, my delegation is also concerned about operative paragraphs 14 and 19 of draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Again, while my delegation was obliged to abstain in the voting on this draft resolution, we appreciate the efforts made by its sponsors and look forward to continuing our dialogue with them, with the common objective of a world free from nuclear weapons.

Mr. Calovski (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 addresses a very important aspect of nuclear disarmament. We appreciate the efforts of its sponsors to enhance the process and promote the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world, which every State, nuclear or non-nuclear, shares. At the same time, the draft resolution reaffirms many positions which have been affirmed many times in this Committee and in many other forums. We share these views.

However, draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1 was not drafted to meet the expectations of all Member States. In our view, achieving the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world is possible only when both nuclear and non-nuclear

States are in agreement. We hope that this can be achieved by future consultation.

Mr. Cho (Republic of Korea): My delegation would like to explain its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. As we have said on many occasions, the Republic of Korea has consistently supported international efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and achieve the ultimate goal of building a nuclear-weapon-free world.

In that regard, my delegation appreciates the efforts of the sponsors of this draft resolution aimed at bringing forward a new agenda towards a nuclear-weapon-free world. We understand the main thrust of this draft resolution. In fact, some elements — such as operative paragraph 8, related to the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT); operative paragraph 9, related to full-scope safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency; and operative paragraph 10, related to early entry into force of and universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) — are issues that we in the Republic of Korea feel particularly strongly about, in upholding the principles and objectives of the non-proliferation regime.

However, we find that the draft resolution contains several drastic elements that are unrealistic and inappropriate from the viewpoint of our basic position on security and nuclear disarmament. In our view, any nuclear disarmament measure should be based on an appropriate blend of idealism and realism. Too bold an initiative will make little progress, while too mundane an approach will have little prospect of success. The right answer to our quest for a nuclear-weapon-free world must be found in the middle ground between the two ends of the spectrum. A practical, step-by-step, focused approach based on clear vision is required on the road to the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons.

In our view, we must admit the reality that no country would dare to compromise its security for the sake of disarmament. An improved global strategic environment, coupled with enhanced mutual confidence, is a prerequisite for realizing meaningful nuclear disarmament.

For all those reasons, we decided to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*interpretation from French*): I would like to explain Algeria's position on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1, "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

Algeria strongly supports nuclear disarmament and every effort to achieve a nuclear-free world. My country has also expressed its position on all nuclear tests, and we reject possession of nuclear weapons for any reason, including nuclear deterrence.

We welcome the efforts of the sponsors of this initiative, but my delegation believes that the draft resolution, important though it is, and though we agree with many of its ideas, poses some problems.

First, besides giving the impression of offering an alternative to the Non-Aligned Movement's doctrine on nuclear disarmament, it refers to the results of the Canberra Commission — whose achievements my country would, in passing, salute — but completely disregards the proposal for a phased programme of nuclear disarmament.

The multilateralization of nuclear disarmament efforts is not highlighted in this text and does not stand out clearly. To give a certain status to countries other than those identified by the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) seems to us inappropriate.

Operative paragraph 10, in our view, should be reformulated, since adhering to an international legal instrument, being by nature a sovereign act, should not be subject to any limitation or restriction, even with regard to an instrument related to disarmament.

For all those reasons, my delegation was unable to vote in favour of the draft resolution. We abstained, and we hope that in the coming years the promoters of this initiative will find language that is more acceptable to many States, including my own.

Mr. Kaba (Guinea) (*interpretation from French*): For various reasons, we were unable to vote on draft resolution A/C.1/53/L.48/Rev.1. I should like to stress that if our delegation had been present we would have voted in favour of the draft resolution, as it reflects the concerns of our country with regard to completely freeing the world from all nuclear threats.

The Chairman (*interpretation from French*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.